1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

place.) The "arsenal" at Bendiyagalge is well seen in Plate XIX, figures 1 and 2, while at Pihilegodagalge all the bows and arrows were rested on an old ant heap in the centre of the cave.

Though men do sometimes dig for yams, hunting is essentially their work, and yams were usually dug by the women who also do the cooking. This is of the simplest kind; yams are roasted in ashes, in which way meat may also be cooked, while practically everything else is boiled in a pot over three stones. Many Veddas also know how to cook curry, and deer's flesh is dried on a rack and smoked. A rack is built usually in a sunny place, the meat is put on this and a smoky fire kept burning beneath it, the flesh is thus dried in the sun and smoked simultaneously. This process is usually superintended by men.

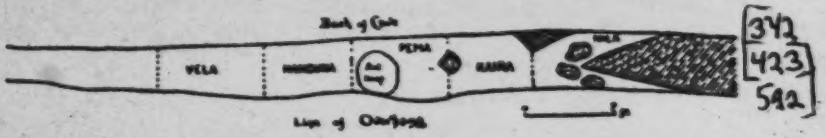

Fig. 2. Plan of Pihilegodagalge.

Plate XVII, figure 1, shows a rack built to smoke meat on the top of the Bendiyagalge rock-mass.

A Vedda will never sleep on the ground if there is any rock upon which he can lie. If he has a deerskin or a piece of cloth he will lie on it, if not he does not seem to object to the cold rock, and so avoids contact with the ground damp from the heavy dews. He always keeps a small fire burning beside him; this was noticed by Nevill, who says: "A Vaedda never sleeps without a smouldering fire by his side. I am assured, should accident oblige them to do so, they have usually died from a fever caught by the omission[1]."

The Veddas are strictly monogamous, and we were able to confirm Bailey's observations as regards their marital fidelity. "Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity,

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, Aug. 1886, p. 187.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

front of it is a much chipped *opulu* tree from which the Veddas every now and then renew their chew. Throughout the day the surrounding woods echo to the voices of food-gatherers or the blows of axes, as combs are cut out of hollow trees. At fiful intervals the *kolong kōka* (stork-billed king-fisher), lord of the rocky stream, raises a clamorous cry, or the wood-pecker startlingly proclaims to the world that it sees the great she-demon (*maha yakkini*). As evening comes, the *kotaha* (gekko) that shares the cave, drawls in quaint imitation of his name, "ko-tak-ko." The night is ushered in by the solemn notes of the night jar* and bell-like sounds of frogs. The crescent moon shines through the trees, peopling the forest with mysterious shadows. Strange noises are heard around, a breaking branch perhaps, a dropping stone, or an animal's foot-falls. Then the little one creeps to its mother whispering, "Mother, the *hetha*"; and she, fondling, replies, "Yes, it is the *hetha*, child; be still." Now fires are stirred, and the Veddas, couched on leaves, and doubled up under their meagre rags, lie as close to them as they dare. For the caves are cold at night even on the hottest day. And every now and then throughout the dark, one or other of them groans with the chill, gets up, pokes the fire, and snuggles nearer to it. Is it a wonder that ash is the morning mark of the Vedda and *Alu galge* a favourite name of his cave? By six, the morning mists have melted and the cave begins to warm.

*At dusk, and all through the night, Horsfield's night jar gathers into its rich liquid notes the silence and mystery of the forest. There is no jungle, however desolate, in which this ever welcome music is not heard. It is at once the curfew of the jungle, the embodiment of all the stealthy, nocturnal life in it, and the destiny and doom of it.

Puthu-hath-pavuva (seven-sons-are) is the Sinhalese name of the bird in perfect imitation of its cry; and the following story explains it.—A woman once sent her seven sons into the jungle to fell trees. One of the trees falling in their direction, the brothers attempted to shoulder it off and were all killed. The mother, having cooked the evening meal, waited at home for her sons. But as they did not return she went out to look for them, and found them all dead beside the fallen tree. Taking up an axe she killed herself and became this bird; and now from dusk till dawn she cries *puthu-hath-pavuva* through the lonesome woods.